DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 264 536 CS 008 239

TITLE	Motivation, [Compiled from Columns in Ten Issues of "The Reading Teacher," January, February, March, April, and May 1984.]
INSTITUTION	International Reading Association, Newark, Del.
PUB DATE	84
NOTE	18p.
PUB TYPE	Guides - Classroom Use - Guides (For Teachers) (052) -- Journal Articles (080)
JOURNAL CIT	The Reading Teacher; v37 n4,6-9 v38 n2,6-9 Jan 1984-May 1985
EDRS PRICE	MF01/PC01 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS	*Class Activities; Developmental Tasks; Elementary Education; Language Arts; *Learning Activities; Listening Skills; *Motivation Techniques; *Reading Instruction; Speech Skills; *Student Motivation; Study Skills; Teaching Methods; Writing Skills

ABSTRACT

"Motivation" is a regular column feature in issues of the journal "The Reading Teacher." Each column presents techniques for motivating students to read that have been submitted by readers of the journal. This compilation gathers together ten columns appearing across 1984-1985. The ten columns deal with the following topics: (1) listening and following directions; (2) building independent learners; (3) writing; (4) oral expression; (5) staying on task; (6) using peer influence to motivate students to read; (7) offering students opportunities for active, personal involvement in the reading program; (8) using techniques that allow students to recognize themselves as invaluable school resources; (9) using strategies involving the principal's office as a source of positive motivation; and (10) creating an environment in the reading laboratory that motivates students to read. Each article presents background information on motivating students within a particular skill area, and suggests ways to assure student participation. (EL)

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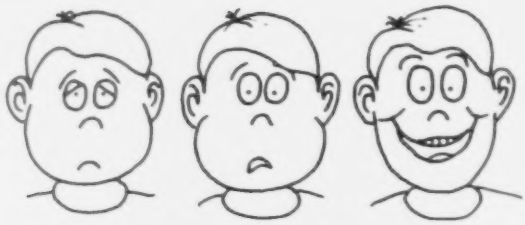

Motivation

Send comments or suggestions for "Motivation" directly to Gail Garber, Principal, Pine Road School, Lower Moreland, Pennsylvania 19006, USA.

Motivational strategies for listening and following directions

Gail Garber, *Pine Road School, Lower Moreland, Pennsylvania*

Let's face it...it is no easy task to get students to listen and follow directions! As teachers, we fall victim to the habit of repeating ourselves over and over again. At the same time, our students remain dependent on us, never developing the independence and responsibility needed for self-direction.

There are several motivational strategies for promoting the independent and effective use of listening skills. The four strategies that follow can easily become integral parts of the learning environment which already exists in your classroom. The purpose of each technique is to create a meaningful opportunity for students to become inspired to listen and react in a self-directed manner as they work. Learning situations in which the ultimate responsibility for direction lies with the students themselves free our youngsters to interact with us, and with each other, far more productively.

(1) *Say it again, Sam.* Using this technique, you are limited to giving a direction only once. It is then up to a volunteer student to aspire to restate the direction as accurately as possible. Several students may participate in turn, with you providing feedback on each contribution's accuracy. As excitement mounts, students will inspire each other and become challenged to be responsible listeners. Explain the procedure to the class beforehand, and then use it often to foster keen attention to oral direction.

(2) *The student as teacher.* Often during instruction, we find a few students who just don't seem to grasp the concept, no matter how valiantly we try to explain it. Out of this frustrating experience comes a perfect opportunity to provide a learning situation in which students can become inspired listeners.

Volume 37 Number 4

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Ask if anyone in the group would like to become the teacher to reexplain the concept. Actually trade places with this youngster, taking his or her seat. As the student instructs, interject as little as possible, and then only for purposes of clarification.

The motivational advantages here are many. The student who is teaching has taken much responsibility for listening and becoming self-directed. The rest of the group listen attentively as they aspire to become the teacher the next time one is needed. Additionally, the students who had trouble with the concept get a new perspective on it that has the draw of peer presentation.

(3) *The buddy system.* The student-as-teacher notion can be carried even further. Establish a buddy system among your students for the inevitable last minute explanations needed during periods of independent seatwork. Create an environment for students to exercise responsibility and demonstrate competence in helping one another to become more self-directed.

Assign buddies—pair off students who may turn to one another for help. Establish the ground rules for using the buddy system, limiting peer consultation to clarification of directions only (no giving answers!). Discuss the purpose and process of the buddy system thoroughly. Allow your students to shape and consequently "own" this motivational technique.

(4) *Round Robin listening.* This last strategy is appropriate during less formalized group discussions. There is only one requirement, which applies equally to all as they take part in the discussion: Before making a comment, each speaker must reiterate what was said by the last person to speak. Participants—including yourself—must "earn" a turn to speak by paraphrasing the most recent idea contributed.

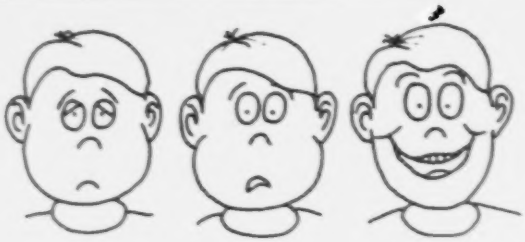
Adherence to this simple rule of discussion promotes consistent and considerate use of good listening skills. Students are given meaningful opportunities to take full responsibility for their communications (oral and aural) with the teacher and with each other.

To become good listeners and self-directed learners, students need bona fide chances to assume responsibility for developing these skills. When teaching, we must accord our students the power of independence in learning.

Providing for "pull" motivation

"If we take a computer-based game that students love to play, and include a computer-based coach that says after each move, 'you should have made this move instead,' you can be certain that after four or five minutes the students will lose all interest in playing this game, no matter how much fun it was prior to the arrival of Mr. Expert....Achieving maximal educational effectiveness must always be balanced against preserving the 'pull' or interest in the activity."

John Seely Brown, Xerox, Palo Alto Research Center, from a presentation at The Future of Electronic Learning Conference, Teachers College, Columbia University, New York, New York, April 1982.



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Motivational strategies for building independent learners

Susan Mandel Glazer, *Rider College, Lawrenceville, New Jersey*

Educators like to believe that teaching causes learning. This notion assumes that students learn what teachers teach, modifying their behaviors as they absorb content. However, examining learning behaviors may help us to understand that the notion is too simplistic.

We know that students learn many things without any apparent teaching. Language learning, for example, happens magically without step-by-step lessons. Students learn about language as well as other necessary variables that affect their lives because of inner desires to share and express needs and ideas. This inner drive creates an independent zest to learn those things needed to survive in their worlds.

Goals for teachers should include the development of strategies that guide students to build the confidence they need for independence with school content. Confident feelings give students the motivation necessary to assume responsibility for their own learning. The shift to independent learning is slow and often frustrating for teachers and students alike. This change in behavior should be a slow weaning process.

You can use the strategies described here as starters to help youngsters build the confidence to become independent learners.

(1) After giving oral directions, have students repeat the directions; watch the students' activity, to assess their understanding.

(2) Develop a written contract with each student. Expectations for fulfilling assignments should be clearly defined. Begin with one assignment and clearly defined requirements in the form of a checklist. Encourage students to check their accomplishments as each is completed.

(3) Ask each child if he/she knows *why* a certain task is supposed to be done. It is important for youngsters to understand the purposes of assignments.

(4) Help students evaluate their own work. Use a questioning technique which guides them to begin assessing work. When youngsters ask for approval or evaluation of their work, say:

Volume 37 Number 6

What do you think about it?
How do you feel about it?
Tell me about it!

Accept all responses—use body gestures, smiles, affirmative head nods, to show approval.

(5) Help youngsters understand that errors are important for learning. Say such things as the following in response to students' work, to relax their feelings about errors and corrections:

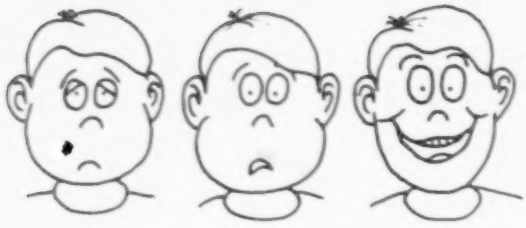
Don't worry about errors [be specific—your spelling, handwriting, etc.], just write your ideas down. We'll edit the writing later.
I love the way you are trying.
It's great to watch you doing your work.

(6) When you're asked questions on classroom procedures ("What should I do?" "Where are my books?"), redirect the questions and ask the youngsters, for example, "What do you think you should be doing?" "Where do you think your books are?" Help youngsters who are really disoriented. Provide words that students have difficulty finding.

Education cannot control the content students choose to retain. It can, however, help youngsters build skills that foster independence. Teachers can cause students to learn how to learn.

Independent students take responsibility for learning. They provide, for themselves, goals agreeable to them and their educational environments.

Release youngsters to become independent learners by providing strategies that foster self-control. Have confidence in your students and they will develop confidence for themselves in all learning environments.



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Motivational strategies for writing

Gail Garber, *Pine Road School, Lower Moreland, Pennsylvania*

Helping children become motivated to write is one of the easier objectives which have been considered in this column. We need merely to recognize some "truths" about the state of childhood, and then provide opportunities for expression which the *child* values.

All children have two very basic needs upon which teachers can capitalize in inspiring them to write. Children need to think, to imagine, to be curious and to examine ideas from many different angles. They do it all the time, whether or not it happens to be our goal for them at the moment.

Children also need to express their pressing thoughts. We have all taken time out of a lesson to listen to a child urgently recount a non-task-related tale, the memory of which was triggered by class discussion.

Meaningful opportunities for written expression of these imperative inner thoughts can be built into the classroom routine, accommodating the needs of the child and simultaneously fostering self-motivation for independent writing. The following four strategies do just this.

1. *Journal writing.* Set aside a 10 to 15-minute block of instructional time during which students have free rein to express their current thoughts in a personal journal or diary. A separate composition book should be used. This writing period should occur at the same time daily.

Journal entries may be shared with the teacher or a friend—it must be clear, however, that the decision to share is the writer's. If shared, the partner can respond in writing on the very same page. Responses are limited to content reactions only; this opportunity for written expression is aimed at fostering independent writing, not conducting a spelling or grammar lesson.

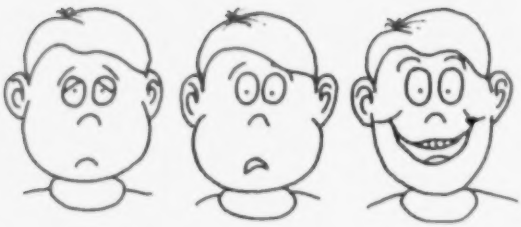
2. *A graffiti board.* Children are notorious for writing and passing notes to one another during a lesson. Why not legitimize this process by channeling it in a productive direction? Set aside one bulletin board as the "Graffiti Board" which belongs to the students. Cover the board with either white or brown backing paper. Put markers or crayons, note-paper, envelopes, and thumbtacks near the board. When children wish to communicate with each other, they may use their board during free time,

either by inscribing their messages directly on the paper-backed board or by writing a note, enclosing it in an envelope marked with the recipient's name, and tacking it onto the board.

3. *Pen pals and senior citizens.* Although the idea of having a pen pal is not new, here is a new slant that is self-motivating for both participants. Solict names of residents in local retirement homes who would be interested in corresponding with your youngsters. Pair up each child in your class with one elderly person, and let the writing begin! Most assuredly, each party will have burning questions to ask, and a supportive interaction can be achieved for the children and the older people alike. As an extension of the pen pal activity, you may wish to have a senior citizens' visitation day in your class.

4. *Classroom newsletter.* Give the students in your class the responsibility of putting together a weekly, informal class newsletter. Through group brainstorming, routine sections can be established, such as a "Dear Classmate" column, "What's Happening in Our Class" and "Things to See and Do." Once the categories for content have been established, children can compose their own submissions. A subgroup can then be solicited to do the editing. (This makes for a great language arts lesson, too!) You can type the finished product on a Ditto each week and distribute the copies for all to read and take home on Fridays.

When we inspire students to write, we are really inspiring them to think and express themselves with purpose and clarity. We are freeing them to develop those very communication skills which are essential to a lifetime of learning.



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Motivational strategies for oral expression

Gail Garber, *Pine Road School, Lower Moreland, Pennsylvania*

In this column to date, we have explored motivational strategies for listening, reading, and writing. We have yet to consider the aspect of oral expression.

Fostering self-motivation for speaking may appear, at first glance, to be an effort in redundancy. Yes, our students do love to talk...we needn't inspire them to increase the quantity. The quality of those oral productions, however, is quite another matter. The focus of our teaching efforts needs to be centered on channeling students' ability to express themselves orally into more instructive and productive endeavors. We need to capitalize on their loquaciousness by inspiring them to refine their speaking skills purposefully.

Keep two points in mind when structuring the classroom environment so as to promote self-motivation for oral expression. The first is that any activity you may devise *must* have meaning for the student. Any opportunity for oral expression that you create must be one that is valued by the learner.

Second, the occasion for oral expression must be particularly well defined so that the student has a workable structure within which to formulate and then express ideas. When giving students the opportunity to speak, identify a specific purpose and delineate any constraints clearly at the outset.

In using the following motivational strategies for oral expression, we can help students become self-motivated to speak more precisely and clearly when expressing their own ideas.

(1) *Giving Directions.* A large part of teacher responsibility during the school day involves "direction giving." Why not turn this emphasis on teacher talk into a focus on student talk by handing some of this responsibility over to your students? When presenting an activity with a set of written directions, have all the students read the directions silently, and then choose one student to explain them to the class. Your role is

one of facilitator, interjecting questions only as needed to help students develop clarity and logic in their oral presentations.

(2) *Share and Tell.* This activity can take two forms. For primary youngsters, the opportunity for oral expression is linked with any personal object the child values. Commonly known as Show and Tell, this activity requires each student to tell the rest of the class about the item he/she has brought.

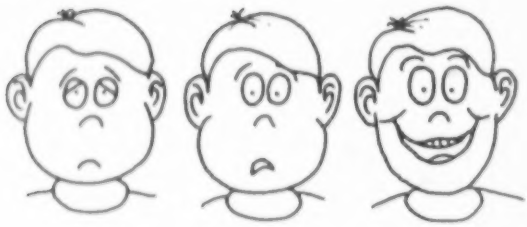
The key to making this both a motivational and learning experience is for the teacher to structure his/her questioning carefully to lead the student to present ideas in full, descriptive sentences and in an orderly fashion. Teacher involvement of this kind is crucial to making Show and Tell a meaningful opportunity for the development of oral expression skills.

The second form of Share and Tell focuses on the goals and needs of intermediate grade students. Here, the criteria for sharing require that the object be of literary or cultural value to the student. For example, students can share a newspaper or magazine article, a book, a product of their own written composition, or their own review of a movie or show recently seen. The object is for the student to summarize, in his/her own words, the content of the topic and to present and substantiate a personal opinion about it. This more academic and formalized approach to Share and Tell gives older students an age-appropriate means of refining their speaking skills.

(3) *Point/Counterpoint.* A spin-off from U.S. television's *60 Minutes*, you can adapt this self-contained exercise in debate for classroom use by giving students a reason for, and the responsibility for refining oral expression skills in a meaningful and motivational way.

Each week, have the class, by consensus, choose a topic of value to *them* to be discussed from two points of view. Select two students, one to represent each viewpoint, and allow them time to research and develop their ideas. (They may use note cards for their presentations.) At the end of the week, conduct a Point/Counterpoint session during a period set aside for it.

Each speaker has the same number of minutes to present his/her viewpoint, then you can open up the topic for class discussion. Your students may never reach agreement on an issue, but they'll certainly develop the ability to express themselves orally.



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Motivational strategies for staying on task

Gail Garber, *Pine Road School, Lower Moreland, Pennsylvania*

The theme of this year's final article serves best, perhaps, as a pointed summary of all that has already been covered in this column on motivation. Basically, motivation for staying on task translates into the concept of caring about what you are doing. This is, indeed, the single most significant prerequisite for all learnings.

Our students care very much about many things. Both parents and teachers have marveled at the stamina and perseverance youngster have exhibited when they are involved in tasks of great importance and interest to them. The ability to stay on task is the unique by-product of caring about the task to begin with! When students care, when their lives are touched by an event in a meaningful way, they are instantly self-motivated to attend to the task at hand for a prolonged period.

The magic to inspiring student motivation for staying on task lies in the teacher's commitment to helping students find personal meaning in what they are doing. If we can structure learning experiences in such a way as to be clearly purposeful and of interest to the *student*, then we can effect a learning environment in which students can become inspired to care about what they attempt and what they accomplish.

We cannot motivate our students. We cannot teach them to care. We can, however, use our knowledge of child development and our insights into who our students are as people to incorporate opportunities for caring into the daily curricular requirements. Then we can give youngsters the power and the freedom to take advantage of these opportunities.

Motivation is a personal feeling, an ongoing, self-renewing process that is intricately laced with learning and growing. Our respect for and involvement in this process must be the cornerstone of our educational structure, allowing us to create environments where all students can become self-motivated, discovering those personal inspirations that arouse the desire for learning.

Volume 37 Number 9

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Peers and reading motivation

Guest author: Russell W. Walsh, *Glassboro State College, Glassboro, New Jersey*

Think about the last novel you read. What made you pick it up? Chances are that it was recommended by a friend or colleague. In my experience, when someone mentions a "really good read" in the teacher's lounge, the book then passes rapidly from one reader to the next.

This same principle can work for us in the classroom. Children are influenced by their peers' tastes even more than adults are, and it's the reading teacher's task to channel this strong peer influence toward motivation for reading. While children may not be expert literary critics, they are certainly experts on what appeals to others their age.

The following activities are designed to provide opportunities for sharing reading experiences.

(1) *"A Good Read" cards.* Set aside bulletin board space so that students can advertise the good books they have read, and place a box of small index cards at the corner of the bulletin board. Each card should have "A Good Read" in large letters, space for the student's name, the book title and author, library call letters, a brief summary of the story, and a short critical reaction to the book. Students completing cards can receive credit for a book report and those looking for something to read have an excellent bibliographical source right in the classroom.

(2) *Soap opera storytime.* Children who are eager for oral presentation may enjoy this type of sharing. A student who has read a book that s/he thinks others may like chooses a particularly interesting incident from it and "tells the story" to the class. At the end of the presentation the student holds up the book, announces the title and author, and says, "If you want to read about the continuing adventures of the characters I've described, you might enjoy reading this book."

(3) *Book talks.* Small group book talks provide excellent sharing opportunities, but as with all small group work, structure is very important. Book talk groups of four or five students should meet every 3 weeks or so and the composition of the groups should change each time. Children report to their group with book in hand, and each one takes a

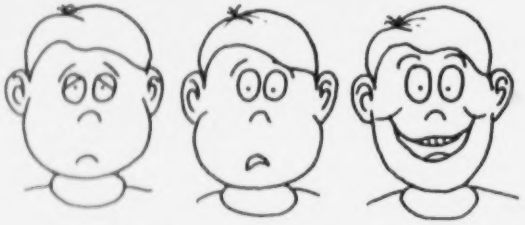
The Reading Teacher; Volume 38 Number 2
November 1984

turn talking about his or her book. You can guide students by a prescribed format such as the following one.

- Show the book and tell the author and title.
- Talk about some of the major characters. Tell what they are like, how they behave, etc.
- Briefly talk about the story the book tells.
- Read a short passage that you think will give others a flavor of the book.
- Tell what you liked about the book, what you didn't like, and why you think others might enjoy it.

The group members then ask the presenter questions to determine if this is indeed a book they would wish to read.

(4) *Summer reading list.* We all want the reading growth children achieve during the school year to continue through the summer. We hand out the usual "suggested reading list" at the end of the year, and yet this list can be much more motivating if the students make it up themselves. The results are surprising when they do. I tried this approach with a group of seventh graders. While their list included the expected Judy Blume, Beverly Cleary, and Paul Zindel titles, it also contained works by John Steinbeck, H.G. Wells, Jack London, and Ernest Hemingway!



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Motivation as personal involvement

Guest author: Anthony D. Fredericks, *Catasauqua Area School District, Pennsylvania*

Student motivation in reading is linked closely to three basic questions: (1) Are students' emotional needs being continually met? (2) Are their self-concepts being reinforced at every instance? (3) Are they personally involved in the dynamics of classroom reading instruction? For many pupils this last concern has the greatest influence on their degree of motivation within and throughout the reading program.

Providing students with opportunities to become active members of the reading program stimulates higher levels of achievement. When students' participation is valued and they are encouraged to contribute to their own reading growth, positive attitudes develop. In turn, deeper commitment to personal reading growth and maximum motivation result. The following strategies will help students become actively involved in the processes of reading.

(1) *Active questioning.* Give students plenty of opportunity to generate their own questions about reading selections. Encourage self-questioning strategies by posing questions that get questions in response. For example: "What kinds of questions come to mind when you look at the title of this story?" "What questions could you ask the major character?" "What questions would you like to ask about any of the illustrations?" Student queries can be jotted down for class discussion. Children who are regularly encouraged to ask their own questions are driven to seek the answers to those questions. This prompts greater personal involvement, higher levels of comprehension, and increased motivation.

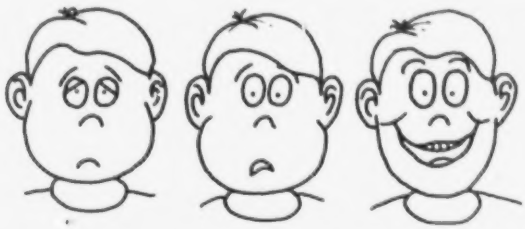
(2) *Valuing work.* One persistent query from children is "What do you think about this?" Many students look for external gratification, rather than establish an internal sense of accomplishment. An effective response is to turn student questions around. You might say "How do you feel about this project?" "Do you feel good about what you've done?" "Do you think this represents your best effort?" Such questions focus on students' responsibility for their own learning. They begin to sense the value of their work, not because it satisfies the guidelines of an assignment but because they had a personal stake in it. Students are often amazed when someone asks them for an opinion of their work. Many youngsters are accustomed to satisfying the dictates of adults, rather than estab-

The Reading Teacher Volume 38 Number 6 February 1985

lishing their own concepts of self-worth. Reversing this habit can help stimulate motivation.

(3) *Self-selection.* Offering students opportunities to select their own reading materials provides a measure of self-involvement and the potential for increased reading performance. Children can select stories to read in the basal text, categories of words appropriate for specific vocabulary lessons, or the books shared during storytime. Self-motivation is enhanced when youngsters are encouraged to help establish the direction or design of portions of the reading curriculum. Even very young children can choose materials for selected reading lessons. Their contributions can become valued components of the classroom reading program.

Designing reading programs that offer students opportunities for active involvement can be a major factor in improved levels of motivation. Students who feel they are actively engaged in the reading process are the ones motivated to succeed. Teachers need to encourage and promote the concept of a child-centered reading curriculum, one that values and stimulates student involvement. Such practices will help motivate greater numbers of readers – both now and for the future.



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The guidance counselor and motivation

Guest author: Elyse Marged, *Lower Moreland School District, Huntingdon Valley, Pennsylvania.*

The rustling of paper bags and giggly chatter could be heard coming from the counselor's office. Inside, the air was heavy with the essence of potato chips and children's self-importance. Later, as the steady hum of intimate conversation from the circle of desks within was punctuated by outbursts of laughter, disbelief, and mock disgust, those on the other side of the door wondered what progressive mode of counseling was underway. Finally the door opened and the answer became immediately apparent...Lunch!

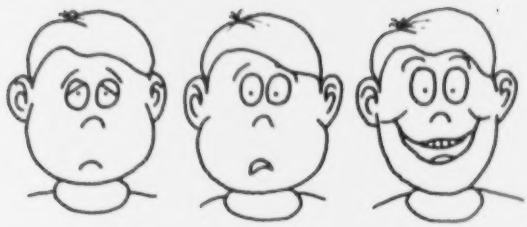
While many perceive the role of the school counselor as synonymous with crisis intervention, in fact this helping professional may have the most profound effect on the self-motivation of students during periods of noncrisis, or "developmental" periods.

Most children develop coping skills necessary for survival long before they begin school, including knowing how and when to ask for help in time of crisis. Assistance from such "significant others" as parents, neighbors, custodial adults, siblings, and friends affirms and reinforces their feelings of self-worth. Conversely, as the necessary mode of intervention is so apparent, people generally respond appropriately to children in crisis situations.

Interestingly enough, it is when children are simply passing through their day to day routine that their ego needs may be most easily overlooked and their self-esteem may suffer most. A counselor who seizes upon these periods may have the greatest impact on students' motivation.

No strategy, no matter how mundane or obvious, should be overlooked. Thinking back to our own childhoods, we note that the adults who made the most impact on our development may have done so with the most subtle of messages...a touch, a word, a listening ear, a challenging opportunity. These human connections are the strongest motivators an adult can offer.

Within the realm of counseling, such structured helping opportunities as supervised peer counseling and tutorial situations, simple clerical tasks performed for staff members, and involvement in community programs may build meaningful feelings of self-worth and lead to improved school performance and increased self-esteem. *Any* technique which allows children to recognize themselves as invaluable school resources is a legitimate self-motivator and should be remembered and used.



Motivation

The principal and motivation

Gail Garber, *Lower Moreland School District, Huntingdon Valley, Pennsylvania*

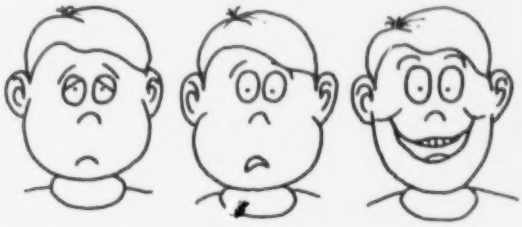
Being sent to the principal's office just isn't what it used to be anymore...nor should it be. With a little work and a lot of thought, the principal's office can become an inspirational environment for children...and it's high time we moved in this direction! Here are some ideas for making your principal's office a place where students can gain a little recognition, a lot of self-esteem, and the desire which spawns self-motivation.

(1) *The open-door policy on student-initiated appointments.* In all of history, kids have been called to the principal's office, usually for matters of discipline. This process can, however, work in reverse, where students may come to see the principal of their own volition and for their own reasons. Letting students know that they can make appointments to talk things over gives them a small and yet significant opportunity to take responsibility for their own lives. The content of these talks is not nearly as important as our students having the initiative and the "power" to be self-reliant.

(2) *Letters to the principal.* Every school newspaper needs a section set aside for letters to the principal. It's good for students to have a vehicle for expressing their concerns or appreciation and for receiving meaningful responses. Conversely, the principal should be responsible for responding to the issues raised by students. Both letters – the student's query and the principal's response – should appear in the school newspaper. Our students have the need to be recognized as major contributors to their worlds. Through "letters to the principal," this recognition can be meaningful.

(3) *"Share and Tell" with the principal.* Perhaps more than anything else, our students need to feel competent and to be recognized for this competence. The principal's office can be the site for many such momentous occasions. Students can have the opportunity to share their work with the principal. Anything from the performance of a choral reading to the presentation of a special project can be given time in the principal's schedule. Administrative time can't be put to much better use than sharing in student accomplishments and promoting that all-important sense of self-worth.

With a little time and a lot of attention, the principal's office can become an environment in which the wellsprings of student motivation may begin to flow. Is there any more noble aspiration than this for an educational administrator?



Motivation

Send comments or suggestions for "Motivation" directly to Gail Garber, Principal, Pine Road School, Lower Moreland, Pennsylvania 19006, USA.

The reading specialist: Creator of motivation for learning

Guest author: Susan Mandel Glazer, *Rider College, New Jersey*

Assessing the reading lab's environment

Have you looked around your school reading lab lately? Does it invite students to read, write about, and respond to literature, past experiences and school learnings? Incentives for reading and responding are generated in environments that help students feel comfortable. All students, but particularly remedial learners, need extrinsic aids to create that comfort, and the best way to discover how well your reading lab provides them is to assess your environment.

On the checklist here (created in conjunction with Lyndon W. Searfoss of Arizona State University), if 80% of your responses are "yes," then your school's lab serves as a motivational aid for instruction and learning.

Does the lab have:
Books to meet the students' reading interests? ___
Books to meet the students' reading abilities? ___
Dictionaries at several reading ability levels? ___
Reference books (encyclopedias, cookbooks, arts and crafts) to meet all interest and reading levels? ___
A variety of literature for all levels and interests? ___
Game books for solving word problems? ___
Tape-and-book sets for listening and reading together? ___
Poetry and rhyming books? ___
Books with "predictable" language for young and remedial readers? ___
Both soft and hardcover books? ___
Varieties of writing tools?
pencils ___ crayons ___ ball points ___ ink pens ___ chalk ___ colored markers ___ typewriters ___ paints ___ erasers ___
A variety of paper?
lined ___ unlined ___ colored construction in various sizes ___ colored tissue ___ photocopy ___ carbon paper ___ oak tag ___ other ___
Drama materials?
costumes ___ wigs ___ crepe paper ___ props ___ performance area ___
Hardware for responding to reading and writing?
tape recorders ___ videotape equipment ___ motion picture camera ___ still camera ___ cassettes ___ overhead projector ___ computer ___ typewriters ___

Assessing your interaction with students

Do you help students relax? Do you help them feel relieved about responding? You are part of the learning environment and therefore must be part of your classroom's motivational aids. Answer these questions with "yes" or "no" in the blank.

Do I chat with students before working with them? ____
Do I try to find topics which excite each student by conversing with individual students? ____
Do I develop trust between each student and myself by
(a) accepting responses offered
(b) praising students for responses (with remarks such as "I like the way you said that" or "That's really interesting")? ____
Do I make constructive remarks about students' work, referring to points discussed (such as "Your composition is ready to be edited for punctuation – that will help others read your wonderful ideas")? ____
Is my working space quiet and quaint? ____
Is my chair next to the students' chairs? ____
Do I build in accountability for expected behaviors? ____

I remember my freshman composition teacher in college well. Her motivation was sincere and significant. Once her comments to me were, "Susan, this is a great paper. Ideas are well thought out, reflecting your interest. Your response has earned an 'A'. Let's work on editing together – particularly spelling."

That was the first time I felt incentive to continue to write, rewrite and edit. That teacher noticed my strengths and offered help for my needs.

When you think about your motivational aids, look at your environment, your attitudes and behaviors. Think about how you can modify these to guide remedial students to learn.